



Minutes

For

RDU STaRS User Group Meeting #15

(Prepared by Robert Stroup)

The Roadway Design STaRS User group held a meeting on October 17, 2007 in the Roadway Design Conference Room. The following were in attendance:

Mary Sue Aldridge	Ron Allen	Jay Bennett	Greg Brew	Gary Lovering
Ron McCollum	Jimmy Norris	Rekha Patel	Robert Stroup	Roger Thomas

The major topics and a summary of discussions for each of those topics are shown below.

- **Update from Project STaRS User Group**

Greg Brew gave an update from the main STaRS User Group monthly meeting held on October 15, 2007. Stan MacIntyre gave an overview of the new Time Sheet Assistant. The go-live date is estimated for sometime in November. NCDOT may have platform issues with the new Time Sheet Assistant due to the varied computers and operating systems that we run. Ron Allen said that he would contact Stan to verify that sufficient coordination has occurred between the developers of the Time Sheet Assistant and BEACON.

Employees working on TIP projects with networks established in STaRS need to charge their time to activity elements and activities, not to WBS numbers. Charging time to only WBS numbers causes schedule problems. Jimmy stated that they might investigate controls to prevent these incorrect time charges. Jimmy and Mary Sue will have Bryce Clodfelter look at blocking time charges to the WBS.

Jimmy is developing a workshop to discuss scheduling, streamlining, time charges, and other important issues that Jimmy and other users have uncovered over the past year.

Greg demonstrated a "Tip and Trick" shown by Jimmy Norris at the main STaRS User Group meeting. In Project Builder → Planning Board, hit the 'Highlight objects...' button. In the folder structure that comes up on the left of the window, open the 'Objects with assignment:' folder. Click on the items in this folder to highlight activities with PS Text, Milestones, Activity elements, etc. Greg stated that this information would be added to the "Tips & Tricks and FAQ's" on the RDU website (STaRS).

Jay Bennett commented: RDU Staff Meeting topic – the location of the main STaRS User Group's meeting minutes on the Program Development Portal:
(<https://intranet.dot.state.nc.us/Portal/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=239>).

- **Overview of Business Warehouse**

Greg stated that Business Warehouse is basically a "data dump" for SAP. Greg showed the Business Warehouse report "Structure Project Design Engineer Project List". This report was shown at the main STaRS User Group meeting of October 15, 2007. The report's location in Business Warehouse is Roles → BW Reporting User – PS – Reports → PS – Published Reports → Program Development Branch Reports → Project Scheduling Unit Reports.

Greg also showed the "FHWA Model Report". This can be found in Roles → BW Reporting User – PS – Reports → PS – Published Reports → Program Development Branch Reports → Project Management Unit Reports.



In order to run any Business Warehouse reports, you must first run the Business Analyzer from the Start button on your computer, or from the SAP Easy Access screen in the production Business Warehouse on the SAP Logon Pad.

User-specific reports can be developed by Business Warehouse. Jay stated that the RDU STaRS User Group could be a forum to create BW standard reports for Roadway Design.

The Activity Start and Completion Reports are being "cleaned up" and will be republished at a future date. Ron Allen stated that these reports are not only deficiency reports, they are status reports and we need to use them as such.

Ron Allen stated the BW (Business Warehouse) will be upgraded to BI (Business Intelligence) in January 2008.

- **Roadway Demo of Business Warehouse**

Greg Brew will contact Brenda Franks about giving Roadway Design a demo of Business Warehouse.

- **Network Streamlining Process**

Jimmy Norris stated that he has everything concerning streamlining from all of the units from which information is needed. He is heading up a Review Team to look at NCDOT's New Location processes as relating to network streamlining. This team will meet on October 29, 2007 and will consist of Gary Lovering, Brian Yamamoto, Elizabeth Lusk, Ed Lewis, Mary Pope Furr, and Mary Sue Aldridge. Once Jimmy has the Review Team's concurrence on PS 99 activities to be taken out of the standard networks, he will publish the "standard network of non-standard activities" which can then be used on operative projects. Co-PM's will be responsible for adding these activities.

To add the new streamlined networks to operative projects contact Mary Sue Aldridge. Roadway Design will prioritize these projects' requests.

Jimmy Norris' deadline to have all streamlined networks for all processes into production is March 2008.

Jimmy Norris is working with Gary Lovering, Greg Brew, and Roger Thomas, to improve the Minor Improvement Network. The Minor Improvement Network can be customized for a number of projects such as: intersection improvements, minor widening, PCEs, rest areas, guardrail rehab and installation, interstate rehab, etc. DDC and DCE offices will be using this network as well.

Jimmy and Mary Sue stated that they would not use the existing Minor Improvement Network due to the numerous errors it contains.

- **CN03 – Long Text Display – Add “When to Confirm” Information?**

Greg Brew will talk to Jim McMellon about having the Activity Confirmations link on the RDU web page (<http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/highway/roadway/PMii/Spreadsheets/PMiiActivities.xls>) point to the current and correct Final Activities Confirmation spreadsheet on the Program Development Portal (<https://intranet.dot.state.nc.us/Portal/Handlers/GroupDocuments.ashx?itemId=5165&tabid=239>).

Jay said that he would pass on this information at the RDU Staff Meeting. We also need to let our folks know that this information is available and where to find it.

- **Work on Milestone Confirmation Spreadsheet**

Roadway Design has reviewed the milestone list for the New Location network. Jimmy Norris has not received anything from anyone and suggested that we wait until the network streamlining process is over. Streamlining will also affect the Activity Confirmation Spreadsheet, which will be updated at the appropriate time.



Jimmy also stated that the Standard Network Reports would be updated with the network streamlining.

- **Milestone Responsible Person**

This item was not discussed.

- **Miscellaneous**

Ron Allen said that he would talk to Majed about his suggested procedure to notify people when new projects have been created and/or new networks added. (Ref. April 2007 RDU STaRS User Group minutes at <http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/highway/roadway/PMii/Minutes/PMii09.pdf>.)

The next User Group meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2007 at 10:00 am in the RDCR.